Chinese Cultural Influences on American Cinema

Movies are one of the most powerful methods to influence people or a culture. For many years the American cinema has been influencing the American people through the types of movies that they produce.

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in China and Chinese culture. Americans have enjoyed “kung fu” movies starring famous Chinese actors like Bruce Lee, Jackie Chan, and Jet Li. Through watching these movies, Americans of all ages have learned about the Chinese language and culture.

With the rise in animation in cinema, now children can be influenced by Chinese culture through watching movies like Mulan and Kung Fu Panda. In both of these movies, the traditional core of Chinese culture is communicated clearly. Both Mulan and Po have a great respect for their fathers and would face danger in order to save them. Children will leave these movies with an understanding of Chinese family relationships, and that will help them to understand and relate to the Chinese culture today.

Chinese leaders have seen this growing interest in Chinese culture among Americans and they have decided to invest in deepening that influence. This past spring, a Chinese movie company called Wanda bought the American movie company called AMC. This is just the beginning of how China and the US will be working together to produce movies that can influence both countries. Iron Man 3 and Kung Fu Panda 3 are two American blockbuster movies that have planned to film parts of their movies in China and to work together with local Chinese movie companies.

As we look to the future of movie-making in the United States, we will see more and more Chinese influences in our American movies. The next time you go to the movie theater or watch a DVD, look for a reference to China or Chinese culture in the movie. You might be surprised how many there are!

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